



EDINBURGH GUILD OF WEAVERS, SPINNERS & DYERS

Newsletter January 2021

Welcome to the first edition of our monthly newsletter in 2021. It's certainly been a cold and wintry start to the new year! Next month's newsletter will be circulated about the date of our February meeting on the third Saturday of the month and please do think about sending something for inclusion next month. Just email anything which you think may be of interest to pennyskett@gmail.com.

The newsletter is being circulated before the usual date of our January meeting as you may be interested in an online event which is being held on Saturday 16th January. The event is free and is being organised by WARP (Weave A Real Peace) which is an international networking organisation based in the United States. It was founded in 1992 and aims to support long-standing textile traditions for cultural preservation and economic development. Details of the event are below.

Textile Traditions in Guatemala

Weave A Real Peace will present a Zoom Panel on Guatemala on Saturday January 16th from 1:00-2:00, Eastern Standard Time. (6pm to 7pm our time I think!) The panel will include three presenters who have experience with Guatemalan textile groups.

Mari Gray started Kakaw Designs in 2013, connecting a variety of local artisan groups and techniques to international creatives through custom production, travel itineraries, and now online classes such as backstrap weaving. Anne Kelly represents Mayan Hands, a fair trade nonprofit partnering with 200 Mayan women weavers and artisans in 14 highland communities. Alisa Woofter will speak about UPAVIM, a sewing cooperative that fashions a variety of products with handwoven material and supports several community programs.

There will be opportunity for questions from those attending this panel.

If you are interested you can register by accessing the details of the event [here](#).

Stash Busting

Carole Gascoigne has been busy creating a stash busting knitted scarf using a mix of handspun and bought wool.



She has also woven a length of goose eye weave on her Leclerc floor loom to create a kimono style top. The pattern was taken from the Big Book of Weaving and the piece was woven at 4epc. With 245 warp ends it is approximately 60cms wide.

The warp is hemp yarn which Carole had bought at Aldi and the weft is blue face leicester and alpaca.



Another Taos Diagonal Jacket

Sheena's Taos Diagonal Jacket inspired Penny Skett to do some knitting. Knitting also had the attraction of something which could be done beside a cosy fire in the living room on cold winter evenings! She decided to use up various skeins of handspun alpaca, some dyed and some natural.



Scottish Spinning Wheels

Irene Mackay, who visited the Guild at an Open Day, has written a piece about spinning wheels in the collection of the National Museum of Scotland which is well worth a read. It can be found [here](#) or on the National Museum blog for 14th December. Although most of the wheels are in storage it appears that you can arrange to visit the collection – so that's definitely something to be organised when we can finally meet together again.

Threads of Life

If the Guild had been able to meet this month Clare Hunter was going to give us a talk about her experiences as a community artist and banner maker. You may be interested in her website *Sewing Matters* which can be found [here](#).

Her book 'Threads of Life' is a fascinating read. A 'History of the World through the Eye of the Needle' it is an extraordinary mix of the history of famous names and ordinary people throughout the world through stories of sewing and embroidery. Clare begins with the Bayeux Tapestry and highlights its interesting history through the centuries – seized by French Revolutionaries, commandeered by Napoleon and seized by Himmler who organised private visits to view it. The importance of sewing to those imprisoned is exemplified by pieces such as the quilts produced by Changi prisoners of war, the set of bed furnishings created by Mary Queen of Scots when incarcerated by Elizabeth I, and the story cloths of the Hmong people displaced as a result of the Vietnam War. It is an amazing collection of stories not only of the embroidered pieces but of the individuals who created them.

Pushing the Limits

You may be interested in this 'Virtual Shaft Weaving Art Exhibition' which you can find [here](#). The exhibition has been curated by Olivier Masson, a textile artist in France, and Lala de Dios, a weaver and 'textile activist' in Spain. You may find the 'zooming' camera rather offputting but the tapestries are worth having a look at and by clicking on the information button on the right hand side of the screen on each tapestry you can find information about the tapestry and the weaver.

National Association AGM

The National Association has notified member Guilds of the 2021 AGM which is planned for Saturday 19th June in London. The notification letter can be found [here](#).

March Zoom Event

Members agreed that we should organise an online event with Katie Weston of Hilltop Cloud. It was thought that a half day event would be best initially and Katie has therefore been booked for Saturday 20th March.

A talk on 'Fibre Dyeing' appeared to be of general interest. Unfortunately one suggestion was omitted from the possible topics listed in the December Newsletter - 'The Origins of the Modern Sheep' and some committee members thought this would be interesting. Could you let me know if you have a preference for one of these two topics – Fibre Dyeing or Origin of the Modern Sheep. It has not yet been confirmed whether it would be a morning or afternoon event and so if you have a preference for either please let me know.

Spooky Puzzle Solved

Marilyn Caddell has discovered the culprit that buried a hard boiled egg in her planter – a squirrel. Looking out of her kitchen window she was amazed to see a squirrel pick up a whole fat ball from below her bird feeders and take it to the planter to bury it. However she is still bemused by where a squirrel will have found a hard boiled egg.

A Poem for 2020

Marilyn has sent this poem which was written by her 13 year old granddaughter in Australia.

*Pandemic and discrimination, is the focus this year,
Lives have been lost, while others live in fear.
Our society has changed us in the way we think and feel,
2020 will never be forgotten, so devastatingly real.*

*Coronavirus spread like wildfire, forcing people ill,
Until the realisation that this virus could kill.
Death rates increased thousands of lives being lost,
Governments had no idea, what this virus would cost.*

*Technology was needed for jobs and education,
Masks were to be worn, in a socially distanced nation.
Men and women everywhere, poor and unemployed,
And that's when it happened – the death of George Floyd.*

*A coloured man named George, was walking down the street,
When a policeman came over, and swept him off his feet.
George was pinned down, his neck pressured by a knee,
Prejudice was chosen, not grace and humanity.*

*The news blew up, and then the protests began,
Millions around the globe, protesting for this man.
'Black Lives Matter' is what they cried,
For a man of colour had innocently died.*

*Protesters ignored the virus hiding in the crowd,
The protest was against injustice, which should never be allowed.
But, the calm protesting started to decrease,
Raging riots began, people losing the peace.*

*I pray to God that we haven't lost hope,
And that we can all join together and continue to cope.
The nations of our world will continue to fight,
Until the virus is gone, and our justice is right.*

*This year of death and chaos, will always stay with me.
But so too will the love, of my friends and family,
Our society has changed us in the way we think and feel
2020 will never be forgotten, so devastatingly real.*

Next Month

Next month's newsletter will be circulated at about the third Saturday of the month (20th February). Please send any photos of your craft projects and contributions to me at pennyskett@gmail.com.